

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-16 EA-11 EUR-25 NEA-10 RSC-01

AID-20 CEQ-02 CIAE-00 COA-02 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-11

EPA-04 INR-10 L-03 NSF-04 NSC-10 NSAE-00 PM-07 SCI-06

SS-20 SPC-03 OIC-04 INT-08 DRC-01 /203 W

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R 141415Z DEC 73

FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2978

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E.O.11652 NA

TAGS SENV ECE XG

SUBJ ECE-AD HOC MEETING OF SENIOR ENVIRONMENT

ADVISERS ON LONG-TERM WORK PROGRAM

SUMMARY:

SUBJECT MEETING WAS SUCCESSFUL IN FORMULATING AGREED DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SENIOR ADVISERS AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR LONG-TERM WORK PROGRAM. AGENDA FOR SECOND REGULAR SESSION OF ADVISERS, TO BE HELD FEBRUARY 18-22, WAS ALSO AGREED. 25 COUNTRIES WERE REPRESENTED, MOST AT THE SENIOR ADVISER LEVEL. END SUMMARY.

1. TERMS OF REFERENCE: MEETING CONSIDERED BASIC SECRETARIAT DRAFT (ENV/R.4) AND AMENDMENTS PROPOSED BY BELGIUM, CYPRUS, NORWAY, SPAIN, SWITZERLAND, US, RUMANIA AND NETHERLANDS.

2. THERE WAS GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT TERMS OF REFERENCE SHOULD BE CONCISE AND NOT TOO AMBITIOUS SO THAT WORK OF ADVISERS COULD BE RELATED TO REALISTIC PROJECTS. PROVISIONS IN DRAFT FOR BROAD SURVEY AND ASSESSMENT OF STATE OF ENVIRONMENT IN ECE COUNTRIES AND INITIATION OF INVESTIGATIONS ON CAUSES OF ENVIRONMENTAL DISFUNCTIONS WERE NOT SUPPORTED. EFFORTS OF ECE DEVELOPING COUN-

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TRIES TO INCLUDE SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THEIR NEEDS LIKEWISE DID

NOT RECEIVE WIDESPREAD SUPPORT.

3. A KEY ISSUE WAS RELATIONSHIP OF SENIOR ADVISERS TO OTHER PRINCIPAL SUBSIDIARY BODIES OF ECE. THIS ISSUE STEMMED FROM US AMENDMENT CALLING FOR SENIOR ADVISERS TO PREPARE, IN CLOSE COLLABORATION WITH OTHER PRINCIPAL SUBSIDIARY BODIES, UNIFIED ECE SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM WORK PROGRAMS ON THE ENVIRONMENT FOR CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF THE COMMISSION.

4. STANOVNIK POINTED OUT THAT ECE RESOLUTION 1 (XXVIII) AFFIRMED EQUAL STATUS OF ALL PRINCIPAL SUBSIDIARY BODIES AND CUTIONED AGAINST ATTEMPT TO GIVE SENIOR ADVISERS A DOMINANT ROLE VIS-A-VIS THE OTHER BODIES. HE SAID THAT SENIOR ADVISERS MIGHT CONSIDER THE INTERNAL CONSISTENCY OF PROJECTS HAVING ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS, MAKE SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING REDEFINITION OR ALTERATION OF PROJECTS OR SUGGEST NEW PROJECTS. AT STANOVNIK'S SUGGESTION, COMPROMISE LANGUAGE WAS AGREED WHICH STATES THAT THE SENIOR ADVISERS SHOULD "REVIEW PERIODICALLY, IN THE INTEREST OF CONSISTENCY IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES OF THE ECE, ALL ECE ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMMES RELATED TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND, IN CLOSE COOPERATION WITH THE OTHER PRINCIPAL SUBSIDIARY BODIES, PREPARE SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS, IN PARTICULAR FOR COMPREHENSIVE AND INTEGRATED ECE SHORT-TERM PROGRAMME AND LONG-TERM PROGRAMME ON THE ENVIRONMENT FOR CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL BY THE COMMISSION".

5. IN CONFORMITY WITH A US/NORWEGIAN AMENDMENT, THE TERMS OF REFERENCE GIVE PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO TRANSBOUNDARY ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS.

6. THE SENIOR ADVISERS WILL "KEEP REGULARLY INFORMED OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS OF OTHER INTERNATIONAL BODIES WITHIN THE ECE REGION, ASSIST IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF UNEP PROJECTS WITHIN THE REGION AND BE AVAILABLE TO ASSIST IN CARRYING OUT OTHER TASKS RELATED TO ENVIRONMENT WITH WHICH THE COMMISSIN MIGHT BE ENTRUSTED LATER."

7. THE TERMS OF REFERENCE WILL BE PRESENTED TO THE SECOND REGULAR SESSION OF THE SENIOR ADVISERS WHERE ADOPTION SEEMS VIRUTALLY ASSURED.

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8. LONG-TERM WORK PROGRAM: MOST OF THE DISCUSSION ON THIS ITEM PERTAINED TO CLARIFICATION OF THE NATURE OF A LONG-TERM PROGRAM AND A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE PROGRAM. THERE WAS ONLY LIMITED REFERENCE TO SPECIFIC PROJECTS SINCE MOST DELEGATIONS FELT THAT THE RESULTS OF CSCE AND THE NEXT SESSION OF THE UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL SHOULD BE AWAITED BEFORE FORMULATING A MORE SPECIFIC LONG-TERM WORK PROGRAM IN ECE.

QUESTIONS WERE ALSO RAISED CONCERNING POSSIBLE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS. THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE SENIOR ADVISERS WORK PROGRAM IN RELATION TO WORK PROGRAMS OF OTHER PRINCIPAL SUBSIDIARY BODIES WAS DISCUSSED AT LENGTH.

9. BISHOP (SECRETARIAT) EXPLAINED THAT THE LONG-TERM PROGRAM WAS A GUIDE FOR FUTURE ACTIVITIES AND THAT PROJECTS ONLY BECAME OPERATIONAL WHEN INTRODUCED INTO THE SHORT-TERM PROGRAM AND APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION. HE ALSO ELABORATED ON THE DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES AMONG THE PRINCIPAL SUBSIDIARY BODIES POINTING OUT THAT THE SENIOR ADVISERS COULD ONLY UNDERTAKE PROJECTS NOT INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAMS OF OTHER COMMITTEES SUCH AS COAL, STEEL, CHEMICALS AND WATER. JOINT PROJECTS WITH OTHER COMMITTEES MIGHT BE POSSIBLE, HOWEVER. HE ADDED THAT PROJECTS RECOMMENDED BY UNEP TO ECE WOULD BE REFERRED DIRECTLY TO THE COMMITTEE CONCERNED RATHER THAN TO THE SENIOR ADVISERS.

10. THIS STATEMENT RAISED QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE ROLE OF THE SENIOR ADVISERS IN RELATION TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS CARRIED OUT BY OTHER BODIES. AT US SUGGESTION, THIS MATTER WILL BE CONSIDERED AT NEXT REGULAR SESSION AND THE SECRETARIAT WILL PREPARE A PAPER. IT WAS AGREED THAT A FRAMEWORK SHOULD BE ELABORATED WHEREBY THE SENIOR ADVISERS WOULD BE FULLY APPRIZED OF ALL ECE P
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECOLOGY, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 DEC 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973GENEVA06574
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: GENEVA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731225/aaaaasex.tel
Line Count: 134
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags: ANOMALY
Review Date: 09 OCT 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09-Oct-2001 by rowellE0>; APPROVED <11 MAR 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ECE-AD HOC MEETING OF SENIOR ENVIRONMENT ADVISERS ON LONG-TERM WORK PROGRAM
TAGS: SENV, XG, ECE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005